

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner issued a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. § 121.

By this Amendment and Response to the Restriction Requirement, Applicant cancels claims 3-6, 8-24, 27, 28, 30-33, and 35-43 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant adds new claims 45-87. New claims 45-87 correspond to original claims 1-43. Claims 44-87 are now pending.

With regard to the Examiner's restriction requirement, the Examiner required restriction to one of the following inventions: Group I corresponding to claims 3-6, 8-24, 27, 28, 30-33, 35-39, and 42-44 allegedly drawn to a flow control method, which is classified in class 370, subclass 229; Group II corresponding to claim 40 drawn to a method for arbitration using a probe cell, which is classified in class 370, subclass 462; and Group III corresponding to claim 41 drawn to an apparatus for spraying a data request, which is classified in class 370, subclass 395.31. The Examiner alleged that the inventions of Groups I-III are related as subcombinations usable together in a single combination.

By this Amendment, Applicant has made claim 84 (formerly claim 40) depend from claim 82 (formally claim 38). Applicant has also made claim 85 (formerly claim 41) depend from claim 67 (formerly claim 23). Accordingly, Applicant submits that the Examiner's restriction requirement is rendered moot. Nevertheless, Applicant provisionally selects Group I.

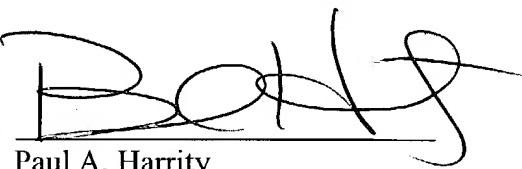
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the restriction requirement and examination of pending claims 44-87 is respectfully requested.

PATENT
Application Serial No. 09/448,124
Attorney Docket No. 0023-0165

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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